

## Case 3033

***Myoxus japonicus* Schinz, 1845 (currently *Glirulus japonicus*; Mammalia, Rodentia): proposed conservation as the correct original spelling of the specific name**

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this application is to conserve the nominal species *Myoxus japonicus* Schinz, 1845 as the correct original spelling of the specific name of the Japanese Dormouse. Schinz proposed the name as *M. javanicus* but, since the species occurs only in Japan as was noted by Schinz, this has long been considered a mistake for *japonicus*, the spelling used by later authors. The Commission is asked to rule that *japonicus* is the correct original spelling. *Myoxus japonicus* is the type species by monotypy of *Glirulus* Thomas, 1906 (family GLIRIDAE) and it is proposed that the generic and specific names be placed on the Official Lists.

**Keywords.** Nomenclature; taxonomy; Mammalia; Rodentia; GLIRIDAE; *Glirulus*; *Glirulus japonicus*; Japanese Dormouse; Japan.

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1. Temminck (1844, p. 52, pl. 16, figs. 4-6) described and named as *Myoxus elegans* a new species of dormouse from Japan. However, the previous year Wagner (1843, p. 266) had transferred the name of the South African dormouse, *Graphiurus elegans* Ogilby, 1838 to the genus *Myoxus*. Schinz (1845, pp. 79-80) also placed *Graphiurus elegans* in *Myoxus*. In an addendum to the same work Schinz (pp. 530-531) pointed out that the name *M. elegans* Temminck was preoccupied by *M. elegans* (Ogilby) and (p. 530) proposed *Myoxus javanicus* (nomen novum) as a replacement name for *M. elegans* Temminck, referring to it as 'Der javanische Schläfer'. Despite these allusions to Java he gave a diagnosis in both Latin and German which ended with the words 'Habitat in Japonia' and 'Bewohnt Japan'. In the index (p. 559) the name *Myoxus javanicus* is repeated.

2. Thomas (1880, p. 40), initially unaware that Schinz had already replaced the preoccupied name *Myoxus elegans* Temminck, proposed *Myoxus lasiotis* as a replacement name. In an addition to this note, Thomas (p. 41) wrote: 'Since writing the above I have discovered that this species has been renamed *M. javanicus* by Schinz, in the appendix to his *Synopsis Mammalium*. As this name is incorrect and misleading, the species still requires a new name, in accordance with rule xi. of the Stricklandian code'. Later, Thomas (1906, p. 347) referred to Schinz's name *javanicus*

and wrote: 'We may, however, look upon it as a misprint for *japonicus*, and amend it accordingly, for the statement 'Habitat in Japonia' clearly shows that Schinz did not suppose it came from Java, and the accidental alteration of two letters only would make the difference'. Thomas pointed out that this course had already been taken by Wallace (1892, p. 395). Thomas also wrote: 'With regard to the generic position of this Dormouse, I think it cannot be assigned to any of the existing groups and must have a special name of its own'. He (p. 347) established the nominal genus *Glirulus* with *Myoxus japonicus* [sic] Schinz, 1845 as type species by monotypy. Since then, the name *japonicus*, attributed to Schinz (1845), has been universally used by zoologists (e.g. Aoki, 1913; Ellerman & Morrison-Scott, 1945; Holden, 1993). Although Wagner's South African species (para. 1 above) and *Glirulus japonicus* are no longer treated as congeneric it would be incorrect under Article 59.3 of the Code to reintroduce the specific name *elegans* Temminck.

3. The use of the spelling 'javanicus' twice and 'javanische' once in Schinz's original publication (see para. 1 above) and the absence of explicit evidence of an error prevent the name *javanicus* being interpreted as an incorrect original spelling of *japonicus* which would qualify for automatic correction under Article 32.5. However, as mentioned in para. 1 above, 'javanicus' Schinz was a replacement name for *elegans* Temminck and under Article 72.7 the two names are objective synonyms. It would upset nomenclature and serve no useful purpose to return to the confusing name *javanicus*, unused as valid for over 100 years.

4. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

- (1) to use its plenary power to rule that the name *javanicus* Schinz, 1845, as published in the binomen *Myoxus javanicus*, is an incorrect original spelling of *japonicus*;
- (2) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Glirulus* Thomas, 1906 (gender: masculine), type species by monotypy *Myoxus japonicus* Schinz, 1845;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *japonicus* Schinz, 1845, as published in the binomen *Myoxus japonicus* and ruled under (1) above to be the correct original spelling of *javanicus* (specific name of the type species of *Glirulus* Thomas, 1906);
- (4) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology the following names:
  - (a) *javanicus* Schinz, 1845, as published in the binomen *Myoxus javanicus* and ruled under (1) above to be an incorrect original spelling;
  - (b) *elegans* Temminck, 1844, as published in the binomen *Myoxus elegans* (an invalid senior objective synonym of *Myoxus japonicus* Schinz, 1845).

#### Acknowledgements

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